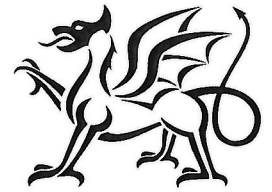


Mark Drakeford AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MA(P) MD/1068/16

Kirsty Williams AM
Assembly Member for Brecon and Radnor
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

9 March 2016

Dear Kirsty,

During the Plenary session on 23 February, you raised the issue of eating disorders and asked for an update on the steps the Welsh Government is taking to provide more services to people with an eating disorder in Wales, noting many often have to find placements a long way from home.

While, there will always be a need for people to receive very specialist treatment in England, I have been clear that, wherever possible, people should be treated in Wales as close to home as possible. Over the course of the last two years, the number of people who have received out-of-area treatment has remained relatively constant at 35 adults and 10 children during 2015-16 compared to 33 adults and seven children during 2014-15.

Our plan to improve provision in Wales began in 2010 when we provided £1m annually to support the development of adult community-led services. This was further enhanced by an additional £250,000 annually from 2013 to enhance provision for children and young people – adolescence is the time when many of these illnesses first manifest themselves.

To support and ensure consistent planning of activity in 2015, the all-ages eating disorder group was established as a sub-group of the child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) planning network, which is chaired by Carol Shillabeer, the chief executive of Powys Teaching Health Board. The Welsh Government also commissioned a review of inpatient eating disorder services, which reported in 2015, and a refresh of the *Eating Disorder Framework for Wales*, first published in 2009.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

A summary of activity in each of these areas is as follows:

All-ages eating disorder sub-group of CAMHS planning network

The CAMHS eating disorder planning network formed an eating disorder sub-group to consider the full age range of eating disorder service development, including specialist eating disorder inpatient provision in England when required or when necessary. This followed a review of inpatient eating disorder provision commissioned by the Welsh Government, which recommended the creation of a new forum to take forward eating disorder service development. It includes representation from health board clinicians and management concerned with the provision of eating disorder services and the third sector, service users and families.

The group has also been collaborating with Public Health Wales about the refresh of the *Eating Disorder Framework for Wales*. Priorities for 2016 include extending membership to encompass education and representation from GPs and other medical specialties. It also proposes undertaking an audit of inpatient admissions for treatment of eating disorders to identify strategies for admission prevention.

Adult eating disorder services

There are four adult eating disorder teams in Wales and each has focused on the following aspects of service development and enhanced service provision:

- Training and supervision, including clinical supervision
- Research and audit
- Service user involvement
- Information governance

The teams have undertaken a retrospective audit of case notes of those Welsh patients placed at the current specialist eating disorder preferred provider in units outside Wales.

The audit aims to initiate a programme to review standards of eating disorder services at these units. The intention is that this would assist in the review of the existing contractual arrangements currently in place. On initial review of data from providers there appeared to be scope for the development of a more comprehensive quality and outcomes indicators to be developed in collaboration with eating disorder providers and this work is progressing through the eating disorder sub-group as part of its current work programme.

CAMHS eating disorder services

Provision of eating disorder services in CAMHS has traditionally been seen as core work, with estimates that around 40% of CAMHS inpatient admissions are for an eating disorder.

In October 2013, I announced a £250,000 annual additional investment in CAMHS to improve eating disorder provision. The funding has been targeted at the recruitment of specialist eating disorder clinical staff across South East, Mid and West Wales; increased eating disorder training among existing staff across the whole of Wales; and the establishment of eating disorder outpatient clinics in East and West Wales and South Powys. It has also ensured acute care beds in the South Wales CAMHS inpatient unit are opened, enabling children with a range of conditions to be treated in Wales.

Funding has enabled the South London and Maudsely NHS Foundation Trust – an internationally-recognised expert in the field of eating disorder, to provide a two-year eating disorders training programme delivered to CAMHS professionals across Wales.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board has established a specialist virtual eating disorder team to improve the timeliness and quality of CAMHS eating disorder work in North Wales. This work will also support the CAMHS inpatient unit in North Wales.

In South Wales, the Bridgend CAMHS inpatient unit has developed a hub and spoke model of provision with the Bridged hub providing outreach in East and West Wales and in southern Powys. The core principle is to engender service redesign and improvement with the aim of providing treatment closer to home.

Review of eating disorder inpatient provision

In March 2015, the Welsh Government received the final appraisal of tier four (inpatient) eating disorder services for all-ages from Cwm Taf University Health Board. It showed tier four admissions and readmissions are stabilising, as is the length of stay for admissions. It also suggested it would not be clinically or financially viable to establish a stand-alone tier four service in Wales at this time.

Copies of the review summary document were shared with members of the Petitions Committee and Cross Party Eating Disorder Group.

Refresh of the *Eating Disorder Framework for Wales*

In early 2015, I agreed it was appropriate to refresh the *Eating Disorder Framework for Wales*, which was first published in 2009. Public Health Wales, which is leading on this work, had a remit to consider the policy context; the introduction of any new guidance and the evidence of any new treatments or interventions to establish whether there have been any significant developments since the original document was prepared. Work has now completed and the framework is undergoing internal quality assurance.

In undertaking the work, Public Health Wales consulted and engaged widely with professionals and service users to consider delivery from different perspectives. However, I understand there does not appear to have been significant changes or additions to the evidence base. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, which has twice looked at the subject, found there was not enough change to warrant a review. However, NICE is currently consulting on clinical guidelines for eating disorders, which will be published in 2017.

It is important to note that specialist services should not be viewed as outside mainstream provision. They are supported by primary care and have benefitted from improvements in primary care as a result of the introduction of local primary mental health support services under the Mental Health (Wales) Measure. They are also supported by more specialist mental health services.

The introduction of community outreach teams in CAMHS enables more young people, including those with eating disorders, to receive treatment in their home and local community without the need for admission to hospital.

More broadly, the Welsh Government has invested in both children's and adult mental health services – £7.65m and £7.9m, respectively. This will fund the recruitment of new specialist staff and the development of new services.

I hope you find this information helpful

Best wishes,

Mark.

Mark Drakeford AC / AM

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Minister for Health and Social Services